

THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

The *Journal of Education* for January 31 contains the following editorial, which is especially significant because of the wide range of personal observation enjoyed by Editor A. E. Winship who wrote it.

The Public School Issue—The Sterling-Reed Education Bill in the present Congress is likely to be the test of loyalty or disloyalty to the public schools of the United States.

What the attempt to land tea at the Boston docks was to England, what the Dred Scott decision was to slavery, what the sinking of the *Maine* was to Spain, what the sinking of the *Lusitania* was to Germany, the defeat of the Education Bill is liable to be to all antipublic-school interests.

It is not a question whether we are satisfied with this bill; it is plain as day that "Remember the Education Bill" is liable to mean as much in American politics as was "Remember the Maine."

We speak all the more freely because we have had no part in framing the bill. Personally, we shall have no humiliation in its defeat. We are not speaking for ourselves in any wise.

Everything said or written by educational aristocrats, so called, makes a vote on the bill a test of one's place in the battle line for or against educational democracy, solidifies nine-tenths of the American people for the bill.

Every objection to the financial feature of the bill is believed to represent the big tax payers and the so-called big interests, who appear to make the dollar of more importance than the child.

So every phase of opposition to the Education Bill is liable to be popularly interpreted as opposition to the greatest efficiency of the public schools.

What Little Round Top was to the fate of Southern Armies, The Sterling-Reed Education Bill is liable to be to all opponents of the public schools. That stone wall in the graveyard at Gettysburg was not such a fortification as the Union Generals would have selected. It was not high enough; it had too many open spaces. An expert builder of breastworks for a battle could have found no end of weak spots in it, and the Southern general made his charge across that field and up that hill on his interpretation of the weak features of the stone wall, but it was in the right place at the right time for the Union army to use whatever there was of it.

So we suspect that the Education Bill, which may not be high enough, which may have too many weak places, is high enough and strong enough for the public schools to withstand all attacks.

We would rather be behind that Education Bill breastwork in defence of the American public school than charging across the field and up the hill depending upon the imperfections of the bill that is likely to become the defence of the public school.

"LET'S PLAY IT"

"Let's play it," is a common response of children to a story or new experience. Utilizing this tendency to dramatize, the kindergarten child is taught many things which fit him to take up primary school work, according to the bulletin "How the Kindergarten Prepares Children for Primary Work," just issued by the Department of the Interior through the Bureau of Education.

The kindergarten and the primary grades have often been accused of working at cross purposes, but the differences are rapidly disappearing as educators grow in an understanding of the place which both kindergarten and primary ideals and skills have in the educative process.

Unconsciously the child who plays a game in which 2-3-5 children must do this or that, or who plants seeds or bulbs in rows or groups gains a knowledge of numbers and number combination which forms a basis for the study of arithmetic. Counting is a necessary part of the children's kindergarten work. They must know how many chairs, papers, scissors, or other pieces of material are needed. All this is not looked upon as a lesson, for it comes as an accessory to the problem or game of the moment.

Stories, conversation, dramatic games, pantomime, and drawing are important in the pre-writing stage of communication. Kindergarten stories, says the author of the bulletin, stress the sequence of ideas, and the vocabulary develops through repeating stories and through directed conversation. Clear enunciation is also developed. The observation games have for their definite end increase in the rate of recognizing objects and groups of objects.

The geography of the children's own environment is strongly stressed in kindergarten work. The direction from the child's home to the school, the mail box, the store; talks about food, shelter material, and clothing, how they come to us by train, auto, or airplane; where fuel comes from; where birds go in winter; all arouse in the child a feeling of wonder about the the unfamiliar, as well as about people and things that are near them. A wise teacher is she who makes the most of this and tries to develop it into an active desire to find out more about the things which are strange and miraculous to the child.

Kindergarten gives the child experience and stimulates his interest in the subjects which are taken up as definite studies in the primary grades.

HEALTH PROMOTION IN A CONTINUATION SCHOOL

A school where parents and teachers work together for the good of the pupils, where children are educated beyond the narrow meaning of the term, where education is what it really should be—training for living—is described in the bulletin "Health Promotion in a Continuation School," just issued by the Department of the Interior through the Education Bureau.

The Girls' Continuation School of Fall River, Massachusetts, was established to comply with the law which requires children of school age in industry to attend school four hours each week, and also requires cities to make provision whereby these children may be enabled to comply with the law. In this textile city many boys and girls work in mills, and to meet the greatest needs of these children the boys' continuation school became a textile school, and the girls' school a home-making school, with emphasis on health.

The girls' school has a capacity of 1,600. Last year the daily attendance was 250. The equipment includes a large playground for the girls, a rest room, a lunch room with modern equipment where nourishing foods are served, a bath, and a laundry where the girls in the home-making department do laundry work for the nursing and infant-care classes. The roof of the building furnishes a good "clothes yard" where the clothes may be dried in the open air and sunshine. In addition to the classrooms for academic work there are classrooms for home nursing, infant and child care, cooking and sewing, and a home-making suite with dining room, living room, bedroom, bath, and laundry. In a smaller suite girls of subnormal type are taught. The course in civics is especially designed to further interest in health and general welfare of the community. An outline of lessons used in the school are given in the bulletin.

PRIZE CONTEST OPEN TO ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR POSTERS ON HEALTH SUBJECTS

HYGEIA, a magazine of health published by the American Medical Association, offers a series of 49 prizes for posters on any health subject submitted before May 31, 1924. The Jury of award will be: Surgeon General Hugh S. Cumming, U. S. Public Health Service; Mr. John T. McCutcheon, Cartoon Artist for the Chicago Tribune; and President William B. Owen, Chicago Normal College, Ex-President of the National Education Association.

Full information concerning this contest, list of prizes, rules of the contest, etc., can be obtained by writing to the Poster Editor of Hygeia, in care of the American Medical Association, 535 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois.

CHICAGO INCREASES TEACHERS' SALARIES

Chicago put into effect at the beginning of the 1923-24 school year a new schedule for teachers and principals. The total cost of adjusting the new schedule to teachers in service was \$4,250,000. The schedule follows:

Classification	Min.	Max.	An'l Inc'e
Kindergarten teachers	\$1,500	\$2,500	\$200
Elementary teachers	1,500	2,500	200
High School teachers	2,000	3,800	200
C'mer'l and Trade (High)*	1,800	3,300	200
Elementary Principals	2,500	4,200	200
	3,000	4,800	200
High School Principals	2,700	5,100	200

*Without degrees

CURRENT EDUCATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

THE UNSTABLE CHILD, by Florence Mateer. New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1924. Pp. 471.

Miss Mateer has written her book largely around the thesis that what a child is depends not only upon how much mind he has, but upon how that mind functions. This will provoke a hearty "amen" from classroom teachers. For who among us has not struggled with the child who tests "high" but who does not fit. Either he "can't concentrate," or he is a "trouble maker," to use Miss Mateer's terminology, or else he is shiftless and lazy. Now this mental reliability and unreliability is somewhat an inherited tendency. But in that word *somewhat* lies the hope! For in our foggy state regarding mental pow-